# VISION IAS

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## GENERAL STUDIES (TEST CODE : 2368)

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|---|---|---|---|
| Name of Candidate | AMAN TIWARI | | |
| Medium Eng./Hindi | ENGLISH | Registration Number | 1522550 |
| Center | ONLINE | Date | 05/09/2024 |

### INDEX TABLE

| Q. No. | Maximum Marks | Marks Obtained |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | 10 | |
| 2 | 10 | |
| 3 | 10 | |
| 4 | 10 | |
| 5 | 10 | |
| 6 | 10 | |
| 7 | 10 | |
| 8 | 10 | |
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| 10 | 10 | |
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| 13 | 15 | |
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| 15 | 15 | |
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| 17 | 15 | |
| 18 | 15 | |
| 19 | 15 | |
| 20 | 15 | |

**Total Marks Obtained:**

**Remarks:**

### INSTRUCTIONS

1. Do furnish the appropriate details in the answer sheet (viz. Name, Registration Number and Test Code).
   उत्तर पुस्तिका में सूचनाएं भरना आवश्यक है (नाम, प्रश्न–पत्र कोड, विद्यार्थी क्रमांक आदि)।
2. There are **TWENTY** questions printed in **HINDI & ENGLISH.**
   इसमें बीस प्रश्न हैं **हिन्दी और अंग्रेजी** में छपे हैं।
3. **All questions are compulsory.**
   सभी प्रश्न अनिवार्य हैं।
4. The number of marks carried by a question/part is indicated against it.
   प्रत्येक प्रश्न/भाग के अंक उसके सामने दिए गए हैं।
5. Answers must be written in the medium authorized in the Admission Certificate, which must be stated clearly on the cover of this Question-Cum-Answer (QCA) Booklet in the space provided. No marks will be given for answers written in medium other that the authorized one.
   प्रश्नों के उत्तर उसी माध्यम में लिखे जाने चाहिए जिसका उल्लेख आपके प्रवेश पत्र में किया गया है और उस माध्यम का स्पष्ट उल्लेख प्रश्न–सह–उत्तर (क्यूसीए) पुस्तिका के मुख्य पृष्ठ पर अंकित निर्दिष्ट स्थान पर किया जाना चाहिए। उल्लिखित माध्यम के अतिरिक्त अन्य किसी माध्यम में लिए गए उत्तर पर कोई अंक नहीं मिलेंगे।
6. Word limit in questions, if specified, should be adhered to.
   प्रश्नों में शब्द सीमा, जहाँ विनिर्दिष्ट है, का अनुसरण किया जाना चाहिए।
7. Any page or portion of the page left blank in the Question-Cum-Answer Booklet must be clearly struck off.
   उत्तर पुस्तिका में खाली छोड़ा हुआ पृष्ठ या उसके अंश को स्पष्ट रूप से काटा जाना चाहिए।

**Is student recommended for One-to-One mentoring?**

| Recommended | Strongly Recommended |
|---|---|

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# EVALUATION INDICATORS

1. Contextual Competence
2. Content Competence
3. Language Competence
4. Introduction Competence
5. Structure - Presentation Competence
6. Conclusion Competence

Overall Macro Comments / feedback / suggestions on Answer Booklet:

1.

2.

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All the Best

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Q1. न्यायालयों द्वारा की जा रही व्याख्या के कारण भारतीय संविधान के अनुच्छेद 21 के तहत प्राण और दैहिक स्वतंत्रता के अधिकार के दायरे का विस्तार हुआ है। न्यायालय के प्रासंगिक पूर्ववर्ती निर्णयों की सहायता से चर्चा कीजिए। (उत्तर 150 शब्दों में दीजिए)

The evolving interpretation by the courts have led to the expansion of the scope of the Right to Life and Personal Liberty under Article 21 of the Indian Constitution. Discuss with the help of relevant case laws. (Answer in 150 words) 10

The right to life and personal liberty as guaranteed by Article 21 of the Constitution, has been consistently expanded by the courts through various cases.

Case laws consistently increasing scope of Article 21

① Menaka Gandhi v/s Union of India (UoI), 1978 - In this case, Supreme court (SC) recognized right to life with dignity as part of Article 21.

② Parmanand Katara case (1989) - right to emergency medical aid as a part of Article 21.

③ Common Cause v/s UoI - The SC recognized right to die with dignity as a fundamental right.

④ Puttaswamy case (2017) - Right to

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privacy was recognized as a fundamental part of Article 21.

(5) Subramaniam Swamy case (2016) – Right to reputation was recognized as a part of Article 21.

(6) M.K Ranjitsinh v/s UoI (2024) – SC recognized right to be free from adverse effects of climate change as a part of Articles 14 and 21.

Thus, it would not be wrong to say that SC has consistently expanded Article 21 to give right to life right from cradle to death.

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**Q2.** लोक प्रतिनिधित्व अधिनियम, 1951 की धारा 8A भारत में चुनावी प्रक्रिया की अखंडता को किस प्रकार सुरक्षित रखती है। विश्लेषण कीजिए (उत्तर 150 शब्दों में दीजिए)

Analyse how Section 8A of the Representation of the People Act, 1951 preserves the integrity of the electoral process in India. (Answer in 150 words). 10

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Q3. भारतीय संविधान की नौवीं अनुसूची को प्रारंभ में किन उद्देश्यों के साथ प्रस्तुत किया गया था? क्या उच्चतम न्यायालय नौवीं अनुसूची में शामिल किए गए किसी कानून की समीक्षा कर सकता है? न्यायालय के पूर्ववर्ती निर्णयों की सहायता से चर्चा कीजिए। (उत्तर 150 शब्दों में दीजिए)

With what objectives was the Ninth Schedule of the Indian Constitution initially introduced? Can the Supreme Court review a legislation that has been placed in the Ninth Schedule? Discuss with the help of case laws. (Answer in 150 words) 10

Article 31(b) of the Indian Constitution makes laws placed in the Ninth Schedule of the Constitution immune from judicial review.

**Objectives for introducing Ninth Schedule**

In order to ensure social justice and equality after independence, the state introduced land reforms to distribute lands to landless poor.

However, these legislations were challenged in courts by rich landlords as violative of Articles 31 (Right to Property).

This caused numerous litigations and hindered effective implementation of land reforms.

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Thus, the 1st Amendment (1951) introduced Ninth schedule to make these reforms, immune to judicial review.

**Supreme Court's (SC) review of Ninth Schedule legislation**

① Waman Rao case (1981) – SC held that legislations placed in 9th schedule can be reviewed if they violate Basic structure
(For legislations post Keshavananda Bharti verdict (1973))

② IR Coehlo Case (2007) – SC reaffirmed that post 24th April 1973, legislations in 9th schedule can be subjected to judicial review on basic structure violation.

Thus, the Ninth schedule was brought to ensure applications of Directive Principles of Part IV but the SC has struck correct balance between them and need to protect Fundamental Rights.

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Q4. ऑनलाइन विवाद समाधान (ODR) द्वारा प्रदान की जाने वाली विवादों के उचित, त्वरित और प्रभावी समाधान तक पहुंच कई चुनौतियों से घिरी हुई है। विवेचना कीजिए। (उत्तर 150 शब्दों में दीजिए)

Online Dispute Resolution's (ODR) promise of access to just, speedy and effective resolution of disputes is beset with several challenges. Discuss. (Answer in 150 words) 10

Online Dispute Resolution refers to use of ICT systems in justice delivery and dispute resolution.

Examples → online mediation
→ court sessions in online mode.

Challenges in ODR

→ Digital divide → with only 42% people having access to internet.

→ Lack of digital literacy → in using such dispute resolution methods.

→ Public awareness is lacking with respect to availability of such resolution methods.

→ Proper guidelines are not available with respect to

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procedures in ODR.

→ According to State of Judiciary Report 2023, 50% of district courts lack e-filing facility

→ Inertia of existing lawyers to migrate to new systems.

Thus, there is a need to further strength ODR methods by better infrastructure and e-courts mission is a correct step in this direction.

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Q5. केंद्रीय सूचना आयोग के कार्यालय द्वारा सामना की जाने वाली समस्याओं के कारण सूचना का अधिकार (RTI) अधिनियम निरर्थक हो गया है। विश्लेषण कीजिए। (उत्तर 150 शब्दों में दीजिए)

The Right to Information (RTI) Act has fallen into redundancy owing to the issues faced by the Office of the Central Information Commission. Analyse. (Answer in 150 words) 10

RTI was enacted in 2005 to usher India into an era of transparency in government processes. However, various issues have caused it to become a 'dead letter' as remarked by the supreme court.

Redundancy of RTI due to issues faced by Central Information commission (CIC)

① Case Pendency - As of October 2023, roughly 3.2 lakh cases are pending in Information Commissions (ICs) in India.

② Appointment process - As members of CIC are appointed by committee of PM, Home Minister and leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha ⇒ Causes government dominance

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③ Lack of trust - Due to appointment of only civil servants as the commissioners.

④ Vacancies - Out of sanctioned strength of 11, only 3 information commissioners have been appointed in CIC.

⑤ 2019 Amendment - of RTI has delinked CIC from Election Commission further reducing its powers.

Steps to be taken

→ 2nd ARC recommended -
- → 50% appointments from non-civil service background
- → Appointments by committee of PM, CJI and LoP.

Thus, implementing these recommendations will help RTI become 'masterkey to good governance' as identified by 2nd ARC

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Q6. सूचना एवं संचार प्रौद्योगिकी (ICT) ने भारत में जमीनी स्तर पर शासन परिदृश्य को किस प्रकार परिवर्तित कर दिया है? इसकी पूर्ण क्षमता का लाभ उठाने में आने वाली प्रमुख बाधाएं क्या हैं? (उत्तर 150 शब्दों में दीजिए)

How has Information and Communication Technology (ICT) transformed the governance landscape at the grassroots level in India? What are the key obstacles in leveraging its full potential? (Answer in 150 words) 10

Information and Communication Technology aims to bring about SMART governance at all levels including grassroots level.

S → Simple
M → Moral
A → Accountable
R → Responsive
T → Transparent

Transformation at grassroots level due to ICT

① Common Service Centres in rural areas have enabled villagers to apply seamlessly for various government schemes.

② Direct Benefit Transfers like the PM-KISAN have reduced corruption by eliminating middlemen.

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(3) BharatNET programme has connected gram panchayats through optical fibre network ensuring connectivity.

(4) UMANG App has enabled people to access service of all government levels in one app.

**Obstacles in leveraging full potential**

(1) Digital Divide - with only 42% people having access to internet.

(2) Lack of digital literacy which causes various cyberfrauds.

(3) Lack of public awareness about ICT technologies which hampers effective implementation.

(4) Bureaucratic inertia.

Thus, to transform India into a developed economy by 2047 the full adoption of ICT through steps like 'Digital Didi' is required.

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Q7. सिविल सेवाओं का राजनीतिकरण भारत में शासन के 'स्टील फ्रेम' को किस प्रकार नष्ट कर देता है? इस प्रभाव का प्रतिकार करने के लिए कौन-से उपाय अपनाए जा सकते हैं? (उत्तर 150 शब्दों में दीजिए)

How does the politicization of the civil services corrode the 'steel frame' of governance in India? What measures can be implemented to counteract this effect? (Answer in 150 words) 10

Politicization of civil services refers to increased interference of political executives and representatives in bureaucratic processes reducing their autonomy.

**Corrosion of the 'steel frame' due to politicization**

① Civil servants focus more on serving political masters rather than public.

② Demotivation of civil servants due to frequent transfers
(Average tenure of IAS officer at any post is just 15 months)

③ Increased corruption due to unholy politician-bureaucrat-corporate nexus.
(Eg- Officers like Sameer Bishnoi (2004 cadre), Pooja Singhal (2000 cadre) arrested by ED for corruption)

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Measures to be taken to counteract this corrosion

① Supreme Court in TSR Subramaniam case recommended establishment of Civil Services Board for transparent appointments, transfers of civil servants.

② 2nd ARC recommended a Code of Ethics for Ministers to reduce interference.

③ Public Service Code Bill as recommended by 2nd ARC to instill core values and independent authority to monitor its implementation

These measures can help in depoliticization of bureaucracy and enable them to become 'Karmyogis'.

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Q8. लैंगिक वृद्धावस्था का एक महत्वपूर्ण आयाम है। भारत में सामाजिक अलगाव और वंचना का सामना करने वाली वृद्ध महिलाओं की समस्याओं का समाधान करने के लिए क्या उपाय किए जा सकते हैं? (उत्तर 150 शब्दों में दीजिए)

Gender is an important dimension of ageing. What measures can be taken to solve the problems of elderly women facing social alienation and deprivation in India? (Answer in 150 words) 10

According to Census 2011, the sex ratio for adults (>60 years) in India is 1033 which points towards the feminization of old age.

Problems faced by elderly women in India

- Disintegration of joint families causing alienation
- Lack of social support in form of pensions
- Presence of co-morbities among elderly (LASI study 2020 finds 75% elderly suffer from chronic diseases)
- Violence against the elderly women in form of widow abuse.

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Measures that can be taken to solve problems of elderly women facing social alienation

① Providing social security and insurance under PM-Vaya Vandana Yojana.

② Providing health insurance under the PM-JAY.

③ Strict enforcement of Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Act, 2007 to counter social neglect.

④ Using SACRED portal to give jobs to able elderly citizens to utilize longevity dividend.

⑤ Strict punishments for perpetrators of widow abuse.

⑥ Incentivizing investments in silver economy through SAGE initiative.

Thus, taking such measures will help realise the public assistance objective under Article 41

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Q9. भारत और अफ्रीकी देशों के बीच राजनीतिक एवं आर्थिक जुड़ाव को बढ़ावा देने में भारतीय प्रवासी क्या भूमिका निभा सकते हैं? (उत्तर 150 शब्दों में दीजिए)

What role can the Indian diaspora play in fostering political and economic engagement between India and African countries? (Answer in 150 words) 10

Diaspora is a very powerful tool of diplomacy and Indian diaspora being the most widespread can play an important role in realizing India's objectives vis-a-vis Africa.

Role of Indian diaspora in fostering political and economic engagement with Africa

Political engagement

- Can act as a pressure group for the countries for pursuing favourable ties.
- Make use of shared history of colonialism to foster stronger bonds.
- Making use of business deals and trade to further cement political relations.

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Economic engagement

- spread awareness about Indian brands through word of mouth
- open businesses like Indian restaurants to build upon India's strong culinary.
- create employment for the African people to generate goodwill among people.
- Organize charitable functions to support the cause of marginalized.
- Use of indian products outside to generate curiosity.

Thus, Indian diaspora can help in bringing vibrancy in India-Africa engagement.

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**Q10.** अपने प्रारंभ के एक दशक से भी अधिक समय बाद, बेल्ट एंड रोड इनिशिएटिव के लाभ, विशेष रूप से विकासशील देशों के लिए, भ्रामक साबित हुए हैं। टिप्पणी कीजिए। (उत्तर 150 शब्दों में दीजिए)

More than a decade after its inception, the benefits of the Belt and Road Initiative have proven to be illusory, especially for developing countries. Comment. (Answer in 150 words) 10

Belt and Road Initiative was launched by China in 2013 in order to increase trade ties with other countries and to project itself as a friendly nation.

Ways in which benefits of Belt and Road Initiative have proven to be illusory

① China has become infamous for debt trap diplomacy for giving loans at high interest rates for projects.
(Eg - 65% of debt of Laos is owed to China.)

② The projects under BRI have been awarded to Chinese firms and use Chinese labour.
↳ No employment creation and no ancillary industries

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development in the recepient countries.

③ Projects have often turned out to be white elephants lacking economic viability (Eg - Pokhara Airport in Nepal)

④ Many projects have also caused loss of sovereignity (Eg - Hambantota port in Sri Lanka leased to China for 99 years)

⑤ Caused labour rights violations especially in African countries.

Thus, there is a need for countries to become aware of China's debt trap diplomacy and Blue Dot Network can help in countering it.

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Q11. भारत में पंचायती राज संस्थाओं (PRIs) के समक्ष आने वाली वित्तीय बाधाओं पर चर्चा कीजिए। उनके राजस्व संसाधनों में वृद्धि करने के लिए क्या उपाय किए जा सकते हैं? (उत्तर 250 शब्दों में दीजिए)

Discuss the financial constraints faced by the Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) in India. What measures can be taken to augment their revenue resources? (Answer in 250 words) 15

The 73rd Amendment to the Constitution institutionalized the PRIs to realise grassroots level democracy. But various constraints have hindered in realisation of their full potential.

**Financial constraints faced by the Panchayati Raj Institutions in India**

① Lack of own tax revenue sources – According to 2023 RBI report on Finances of PRIs, own tax revenue comprises < 1% of the total revenues of PRIs.

② Over-reliance on centre and states → Roughy 85% central grants and 10% state grants comprise PRIs revenue ⇒ reduces autonomy

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③ Political populism resulting in low tax and non-tax revenue collections.

④ Corruption among the State bureaucracy which further reduces the money available to spend with PRIs.

⑤ Lack of social audits which cause underutilization and misutilization of funds with PRIs.

⑥ Low devolution of financial powers with entertainment tax being the only major source of revenue.

**Measures to augment revenue resources of PRIs**

① Making central grants conditional on ability to raise own revenues.

→ Just like 15th Finance Commission made roughly 1 lakh crore devolution to urban local bodies conditional on growth in own tax revenues.

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② Increasing tax sources for PRIs by devolving more financial power.

③ Making social audits mandatory to ensure proper utilization of available resources.
(Eg- Meghalaya)

④ Finance Commission can make certain percentage of devolution mandatory on state governments

⑤ Ensuring regular constitution of State Finance Commissions for recommending required devolutions.

Thus, it is necessary to enhance financial resources of PRIs to truly realise the objective of Article 40 and turn villages into 'self-sufficient economies'

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Q12. भारत में स्वतंत्र और निष्पक्ष चुनाव सुनिश्चित करने में भारत निर्वाचन आयोग (ECI) की भूमिका पर चर्चा कीजिए। मुख्य निर्वाचन आयुक्त और अन्य निर्वाचन आयुक्त अधिनियम, 2023 ECI की स्वतंत्रता को किस प्रकार प्रभावित करेगा? (उत्तर 250 शब्दों में दीजिए)

Discuss the role of the Election Commission of India (ECI) in ensuring free and fair elections in India. How will the Chief Election Commissioner and Other Election Commissioners Act, 2023 impact the independence of the ECI? (Answer in 250 words) 15

Article 324 of Indian Constitution created the Election Commission of India as a watchdog to ensure free and fair elections in India.

**Role of ECI in ensuring free and fair elections in India**

1. Monitors implementation of the Model Code of Conduct to prevent ruling party from abusing power.
2. Ensures that corrupt practices like religious hate speeches are not used to garner votes.
3. Mandates submission of donations above ₹20,000 to ensure transparency in political party donations.

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(4) Measures like Myth v/s Reality portal in order to counter propoganda and fake news.

(5) Checks abuse of money power by confiscating illegal cash donations to voters during elections.

(6) Controls the bureaucracy to ensure their functioning in an impartial and non-partisan manner.

(7) Transparent counting of votes and sharing of election-related data.

(8) Strict protocols to ensure no tampering of EVMs take place.

Impact of Chief Election Commissioner Act, 2023 on independence of ECI

~~(1) The Selection Committee~~

Positives

→ Brings transparency in the appointment process of the election commissioners (EC)

→ Ensures that salary of ECs

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are equivalent to supreme court judge giving financial independence
→ ensures tenure security for CEC by making removal same as judge of supreme court.

Negatives

→ Selection committee has dominance of government (as CJI removed and Cabinet Minister in its place)
→ No debarment of CECs and ECs from taking government posts after their tenure.
→ Lack of parity between removal of CECs and ECs which creates power differential and impacts autonomy.

In order to overcome the limitations, Goswami committee recommendations of parity in removal process and CJI in selection committee must be implemented.

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Q13. अनुसूचित जाति और अनुसूचित जनजाति (अत्याचार निवारण) अधिनियम 1989 ने भारत में वंचित समुदायों पर होने वाले अत्याचारों को रोकने और उन्हें भेदभाव के विरुद्ध संरक्षण प्रदान करने में महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभाई है। विश्लेषण कीजिए। (उत्तर 250 शब्दों में दीजिए)

The Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989 has played a significant role in preventing atrocities and providing protection against discrimination of marginalized communities in India. Analyse. (Answer in 250 words) 15

The SC and ST (Prevention of Atrocities Act), 1989 was enacted to prevent atrocities against the marginalized and realise Article 17 (Abolition of Untouchability) in spirit.

Effectiveness of SC/ST Act in preventing atrocities and providing protection against discrimination

① Makes any form of caste-based atrocity on Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes a cognizable and non-bailable offences.

② Criminalizes hate speech against the marginalized communities.

③ Ensures adequate protection of the victim from threat.

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retaliation by the accused.

(4) Criminalizes any form of caste-based slurs from being used against the marginalized.

(5) Untouchability has also been criminalized under the act.

(6) Any type of discrimination at temples, ghats, public places like shops restaurants based on caste and race has been criminalized in true spirit of Article 15.

However, there still exist issues in implementation of the SC/ST Act, 1989.

Lacunaes in the SC/ST Act which cause perpetuation of atrocities and discrimination

(1) Violence against Dalits have increased by 1.2% in 2021 as compared to 2020 (NCRB report)

(2) Atrocities committed by the elected representatives which

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police are unwilling to change
(Eg - Recent urination by MLA in MP on a tribal person)

Other issues

→ Persistent discrimination and occupational labour based on caste
(According to Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, around 97.25% manual scavengers are SCs.)

→ Presence of covert untouchability in form of → separate utensils
→ residential ghettoisation.

Thus, there is a need for attitudinal change in the society to fully realize the principles of UDHR (1948) with respect to SCs and STs.

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**Q14.** राष्ट्रीय महिला आयोग (NCW) के कार्यों पर चर्चा कीजिए। महिलाओं की समस्याओं से निपटने में सिविल न्यायालय की शक्तियां प्राप्त होने से आयोग को क्या लाभ होता है? (उत्तर 250 शब्दों में दीजिए)

Discuss the functions of the National Commission for Women (NCW). How does the Commission benefit from having the powers of a civil court in dealing with women's issues? (Answer in 250 words) 15

National Commission for Women was formed through an act of Parliament in 1990, to uphold women's rights and ensure justice for any rights violations.

**Functions of the National Commission for Women**

1. Examine the legislative safeguards for women and recommend measures for strengthening of such safeguards.
2. Inquire into womens' rights violations and conducting investigations.
3. Check the conditions of facilities housing women like women inmates in jails to make sure they are not subjected to harrasment.

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④ Conduct research on womens' rights to further improve and enhance them

⑤ Spread public awareness about womens rights
(Eg- Digital Shakti 4.0, Menstrual hygiene day)

⑥ Help women in distress through various legal methods
(Eg- Parivarik Mahila Lok Adalat)

⑦ Conduct investigations in sensitive cases (Eg- Nirbhaya case)

**Benefit to Commission from having powers of a civil court**

① It can inquire into rights violations.
(Eg - Recent inquiry by NCW in Jharkhand on rape of a spanish tourist)

② It can summon officials in order to demand explanation for non-resolution of issues.

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(3) It can require discovery of any evidence and requisitioning of any document to aid in its investigation.

(4) Require officials to file affidavits and inquire them on oath to ensure accountability.

(5) Take suo-motu cognizance of violations of women rights cases.
(Eg - Recent rape and murder at R.G Kar hospital in Kolkata)

Thus, there is a need to further strengthen NCW to counter issues like domestic violence and low LFPR and realize the objective of SDG 5 (Gender Equality)

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Q15. भारत में बाल यौन शोषण के मुद्दे का समाधान करने में POCSO अधिनियम, 2012 की प्रभावशीलता का समालोचनात्मक विश्लेषण कीजिए। (उत्तर 250 शब्दों में दीजिए)

Critically analyse the effectiveness of the POCSO Act, 2012 in addressing the issue of child sexual abuse in India. (Answer in 250 words) 15

The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012 was enacted to enhance deterrence against crimes of sexual abuse and provide strict punishments to the violators.

Effectiveness of POCSO Act, 2012 in addressing child sexual abuse

1. Makes crimes against children non-bailable and cognizable offences.
2. Puts the proof of innocence on the accused, making escaping punishment very difficult.
3. Criminalizes any sexual relationship (non-consensual) between a major and minor.
4. Establishes Fast Track Courts (FTSCs) for quick disposal of

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cases filed under the POCSO Act.

⑤ Ensures protection to the victim from any kind of retaliation, threat from the accused.

However, this has not proved to be enough as seen by the recent NCRB data (2022) which shows crimes against women have increased by 4% which includes minor women.

**Lacunaes under the current POCSO Act 2012**

① Pendency of cases in the FTSCs which undermine the purpose of FTSCs.

② Misuse of law by girl's family by filing cases even in case of consensual relationship.

③ Crimes against children continue to happen unabated.

(Eg- Recent case of crime against 3 year old in Gujarat)

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(Eg - Recent Maharastra case of crime against girls in school)

① Remarks by HC judges asking government to reduce age of consent to 16 to avoid misuse.

Suggestions by Law Commission
- → Age limit should not be reduced from 18 to 16
- → Discretion to judges to allow decisions according to case in case of 16-18 year old accused

The above recommendations of law commission along with gender sensitive socialisation can make India a safer place for children.

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**Q16.** भारत में स्मार्ट सिटी मिशन के कार्यान्वयन का समालोचनात्मक मूल्यांकन कीजिए। (उत्तर 250 शब्दों में दीजिए)

Critically evaluate the implementation of the Smart Cities Mission in India. (Answer in 250 words) 15

Smart Cities Mission was launched by the Government of India to ensure development of modern cities in India equipped with smart ICT technologies.

Positives in the implementation of Smart Cities Mission in India.

① Use of smart AI camera systems to catch traffic violators and sending them e-challans.

② Using PM-Gatishakti platform to coordinate public works like laying down sewers, telephone lines, electricity lines in one go.

③ Use of CCTV cameras for 24×7 monitoring to ensure safe environment, especially for women.

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(4) Smart meters in households which prevent electricity thefts, and also help people in saving electricity costs

(5) Online Grievance Redressal Mechanisms for quick and effective resolution of grievances of systems (Eg- CPGRAMS etc.)

**Problems in implementation of Smart Cities Mission**

(1) Crumbling infrastructure as shown by recent IGI Delhi airport roof collapse.

(2) Poor drainage causing persistent waterloggings leading to deaths (Eg- Recent death of 3 UPSC aspirants in Delhi)

(3) Lack of oversight causing illegal constructions leading to increased fire incidences. (Eg- Recent fire in a neonatal care unit in Delhi causing infant deaths.)

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(4) Increasing road accidents due to poor rule / law implementation.

(Eg- Accident in India Report, 2023 highlighting 4.5 lakh accidents that led to death of 1.5 lakh deaths)

(5) Increasing slums in Indian cities (20% of urban population in India lives in slums like Dharavi)

Thus, there is a need for better policy planing and implementation to realize the objectives of SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities)

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Q17. भारत में अत्यंत निर्धनता में काफी कमी आई है, लेकिन स्वस्थ भोजन तक पहुंच अभी भी एक विलासिता का विषय बनी हुई है। स्वस्थ भोजन तक अपर्याप्त पहुंच के कारणों पर चर्चा कीजिए और उनका समाधान करने के उपाय सुझाइए। (उत्तर 250 शब्दों में दीजिए)

While extreme poverty has declined considerably in India, access to healthy food still remains a luxury. Discuss the reasons for poor access to healthy food and suggest measures to overcome the same. (Answer in 250 words) 15

According to recent estimates by SBI, extreme poverty in India stands at 5-6% showing a considerable decline. However, NFHS-5 report of 32% underweight children show how healthy food is still a luxury.

Reasons for poor access to healthy food in India

① Lack of coverage in Public Distribution System - as PDS covers only wheat, rice and coarse grains which don't provide proteins and essential nutrients.

② High costs of essential protein sources like eggs and milk which restrict access to them.

③ Rising trend of junk food culture in villages due to

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easy affordability and accessability

④ Vulnerable villagers losing money due to smoking addiction, liquor addiction or cyberfrauds

⑤ Lack of robust supply chains of fruits and vegetables which causes shortages, spoilage and food inflation.

All of this has resulted in 35% children becoming stunted, 20% becoming wasted as pointed by NFHS-5.

Adding to this is agricultural distress with real farm incomes barely rising by 0.1% in past 5 years.

**Measures to overcome poor access to healthy food**

① Inclusion in PDS system with subsidised availability at the Fair Price Shops.

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(2) Biofortification in coarse grains and rice to provide essential minerals.
(Eg- Golden rice → has Vitamin A)

(3) Proper cold chain infrastructure to ensure robust supply chains and avoiding spillage.

(4) Public awareness towards eating healthy foods (Eg- Recent Fit India Movement by FSSAI).

(5) controlling the price of commodities like milk, eggs, vegetables by checking hoarding and black marketeering.

In order to fully utilize the demographic dividend of India, access to healthy food is essential to create healthy youth and realizing SDG 2 (No hunger)

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**Q18.** भारत में स्वास्थ्य संबंधी परिणामों को बेहतर बनाने में सार्वजनिक रूप से वित्तपोषित स्वास्थ्य बीमा की भूमिका का परीक्षण कीजिए। (उत्तर 250 शब्दों में दीजिए)

Examine the role of publicly funded health insurance in improving health outcomes in India. (Answer in 250 words) 15

Government schemes like PM-Jan Aarogya Yojna have provided health insurance to people for ensuring universal health coverage and protecting the vulnerable and marginalised.

Role of publicly funded health insurance in improving health outcomes in India

1. Ensures quality care in private hospitals even for the bottom-most pyramid of India.
2. Reduces burden of government hospitals which are often understaffed and overutilized.
3. Reduces out of pocket medical expenditure which can push people into poverty.

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(4) Cashless treatments ensure seamless utilization of services without worrying about initial costs.

(5) Specialized care for critically ill people which is often not available in government hospitals.

(6) Skipping long queues in prestigious institutes like AIIMS by enabling healthcare in top private hospitals like APOLLO.

(7) Early diagnosis of diseases through screening tests if provided complimentary with health insurance.

(8) Better geriatric care for old people with co-morbities (LASI study 2020 reveals over 75% old people with co-morbidities)

(9) Reduced burden on middle class which avoid government hospitals due to poor facilities

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Challenges in such a publicly funded health insurance

① Huge fiscal burden on the government.

② Undermining of government hospitals causing further lower investments in them.

③ Misuse of such health insurance leading to vexatious claims and litigations.

④ Denial of claim settlement by insurance authorities could cause huge costs for patients availing high care treatments.

Thus, a balance between public funded insurance and government health institutions is required to achieve the SDG 3 (Good Health) goal.

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**Q19.** भारत की 'पड़ोस प्रथम (Neighbourhood First)' नीति पड़ोसी देशों के साथ संबंधों को बेहतर करने में किस हद तक सफल रही है? (उत्तर 250 शब्दों में दीजिए)

To what extent has India's 'Neighbourhood First' policy been successful in enhancing its relations with the neighbouring countries? (Answer in 250 words) 15

Neighbourhood First policy was launched in 2014 by the Modi Government to improve India's relations with its neighbourhood.

Principles of Neighbourhood First policy
- Diplomatic priority
- Increased regional connectivity.
- Increased investments for combined development of neighbourhood.
- India-led regionalism which is comfortable with others.

Success of Neighbourhood First policy in enhancing relations with neighbouring countries

Nepal
- Recent power trading agreement of 10000 MW over 10 years
- Ramayana and Buddhist circuits.

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→ PM Modi describing relations as 'HIT' and 'Superhit'

Bhutan
- → PM Modi awarded with Order of Druk Gyalpo
- → Recent agreement on Kokrajhar - Gelephu rail link for connectivity.

Bangladesh
- → Agartala-Akhaura rail link for connectivity
- → Land Boundary Agreement of 2015 to settle borders.
- → Plans to sign CEPA by 2026.

Sri Lanka
- → Recent starting of ferry between Tamil Nadu and Sri Lanka.
- → Suwa Seriya ambulance service generating goodwill
- → $5 Billion assistance in economic crisis which generated goodwill.

Maldives
- → Hanimadhoo international airport development.
- → Joint Hydrographic survey signed in 2019.

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## Challenges in the current Neighbourhood First Policy

1. Rise of Anti-India movements in countries like Maldives and Bangladesh.
2. Territorial disputes like the Kalapani dispute with Nepal which have still not been addressed.
3. The intractible rivalry between India and Pakistan leading to attacks like Uri (2016), Pulwama (2019) causing suspended ties.
4. Issue of fisherman getting arrested by Sri Lankan coast guard + the Katchatheevu dispute
5. Increasing inroads made by China
   - → Hambantota, Gwadar and Kyaukphyu port.
   - → Maldives enchancing China relationship to comprehensive strategic partnership.

Thus, the 5S — Samman, Sunvaad, Sanskriti, Shanti and Samriddhi need to utilized to create a peaceful neighbourhood.

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**Q20.** पश्चिम एशिया में बढ़ते संघर्षों के भारत पर पड़ने वाले उल्लेखनीय प्रभावों को रेखांकित करते हुए इसके क्षेत्रीय और वैश्विक स्थिरता पर पड़ने वाले प्रभावों का परीक्षण कीजिए। (उत्तर 250 शब्दों में दीजिए)

Examine the effects of escalating conflicts in West Asia on regional and global stability, highlighting the significant repercussions for India. (Answer in 250 words) 15

The recent Hamas attack of 7th Oct and Israel's retaliation along with Iran's involvement has created a tenuous atmosphere in West Asia with regional and global effects

Effects of escalating conflicts in West Asia on stability

Regional stability

- It can undermine the integration process between the Arab Nations and Israel.
- Dilutes the achievements of the Abraham Accords of 2020
- Threatens a regional conflict between Iran and Israel
- Increased violent activities by Iran's proxies → Hamas, Houthi and Hezbollah.

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Global stability

- Risks longer confrontation between US and Iran as US backs Israel's efforts
- Trade disruptions due to Houthi attacks in Red Sea which threaten economic stability.
- Anti-Israel protests in other countries (Eg- college protests in US, street protests in UK)
- Threatens world war if China and Russia get involved backing Iran.

Repurcussions for India due to West Asian conflicts

① Difficulty in balancing relations between Israel and West Asian countries.

② Increased oil prices which might threaten forex (Eg- Gulf war 1973, 1990)

③ Increased transportation costs due to Red Sea attacks which

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affect businesses and consumers.

(4) Risks to Indian diaspora present in West Asia (roughly 8-9 million + Operation Rahat in Yemen).

(5) Increased scope for Chinese intervention in West Asia which is strategically not good.
(Eg- Recent Hamas - Fatah peace deal in Beijing).

Thus, India needs to actively work towards dialogue and diplomacy to pacify situation in West Asia with Vasudhaiva Kutumbhakam spirit.

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